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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 221966

FOR ASST SEC MOOSE

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 15733 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BRUSSELS LONDON PARIS ABIDJAN DAKAR KINSHASA LIBREVILLE OLOME AUGUST 29.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 15733

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, CG, GW, FR, BE, US, UK
SUBJECT: PARIS MEETING ON AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA

REFS: A) BONN 15454; B) STATE 218255; C) STATE 211443;
D) STATE 203722

1. THE FOREIGN OFFICE WORKING-LEVEL HAS EXPRESSED SERIOUS MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE PROPOSED PARIS MEETING ON SHABA AND HAS RECOMMENDED TO GENSCHER THAT THE FRG CALL FOR CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE PROSPECTIVE WESTERN PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE NECESSITY FOR A MEETING. GENSCHER IS EXPECTED TO ACT ON THE RECOMMENDATION ON AUGUST 30.

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2. WE MET WITH VESTRING ON AUGUST 29 TO DISCUSS THE SEPTEMBER 18-19 PARIS MEETING ON AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA. VESTRING SAID THAT THIRD WORLD POLITICAL DIRECTOR MEYER-LANDRUT (ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL) HAD SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH FRG PARTICIPATION IN MEETING. ACCORDING TO VESTRING, MEYER-LANDRUT SAW NO NECESSITY FOR A MEETING AT THIS TIME. MORE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER,

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HE WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT A DISCUSSION CALLED PRIMARILY TO DEAL WITH AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA WOULD LEAD TO A RECURRENCE OF THE AFRICAN CRITICISM OF WESTERN INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS THAT FOLLOWED THE INITIAL SHABA UNDERTAKING. MEYER-LANDRUT, AND VESTRING TO A LESSER EXTENT, BELIEVED ANY MEETING ON SHABA SHOULD DEAL PRIMARILY WITH ECONOMIC QUESTIONS (AS HAD THE PARIS MEETING); QUESTIONS INVOLVING AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA SHOULD BE DEALT WITH ON THE MARGINS OF THE MEETING. VESTRING THEN NOTED THAT ECONOMIC QUESTIONS WOULD, IN FACT, BE DISCUSSED IN BRUSSELS IN OCTOBER AND WONDERED ALOUD WHETHER ANY MEETING WAS NECESSARY AT THIS JUNCTURE.

3. MEYER-LANDRUT HAD INSTRUCTED THAT A RECOMMENDATION BE MADE TO GENSCHER THAT A DECISION ON FRG PARTICIPATION BE DEFERRED UNTIL BONN HAD CONSULTED BILATERALLY WITH THE US, BELGIUM, FRANCE AND THE UK. GENSCHER IS EXPECTED TO MAKE A DECISION ON THE MATTER TOMORROW.

4. DRAWING ON REFTELS C AND D, WE REITERATED DEPARTMENT'S RATIONALE FOR SUPPORTING IDEA OF PARIS MEETING. WE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT DEPARTMENT ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO KEEPING THE PARIS MEETING FROM BECOMING PUBLIC. SHOULD THIS OCCUR, WE WOULD TAKE THE LINE THAT THE MEETING WAS A NORMAL FOLLOW-ON TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

JUNE 5 MEETING.

5. COMMENT. THE GERMANS SEEM CONVINCED THAT A PARIS MEETING CALLED ESSENTIALLY TO DISCUSS AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA WILL LEAK AND RESULT IN HARSH CRITICISM OF ALLEGED WESTERN INTERFERENCE IN AFRICAN AFFAIRS. FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY ENTERTAIN SERIOUS DOUBTS AS TO THE NECESSITY OF THEIR OWN PARTICIPATION IN SUCH A MEETING. THEY SEEMINGLY FEEL THEY HAVE LITTLE TO CONTRIBUTE. THEY DID NOT FURNISH ASSISTANCE TO THE AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA AND CLEARLY INTEND TO ADHERE TO THIS POLICY. THE GERMANS WOULD LIKE TO SAY "NO, THANK YOU" TO THE FRENCH BUT ARE CONCERNED ABOUT BEING ISOLATED. THUS, THEY PREFER THE OPTION OF CONSULTATIONS ON THE NECESSITY OF A CONFERENCE. IT IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT HOW GENSCHER WILL REACT TO HIS WORKING LEVEL'S RECOMMENDATION. MEEHAN UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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